1 THE HONORABLE BRIAN A. TSUCHIDA 2 3 4 5 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT 6 WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON AT SEATTLE 7 CHRISTOPHER J. HADNAGY, an individual; No. 2:23-cv-01932-BAT 8 and SOCIAL-ENGINEER, LLC, a Pennsylvania limited liability company, DECLARATION OF CHRISTOPHER 9 HADNAGY IN SUPPORT OF PLAINTIFFS' RESPONSE TO Plaintiffs, **DEFENDANTS' MOTION FOR** 10 v. SUMMARY JUDGMENT 11 JEFF MOSS, an individual; DEF CON COMMUNICATIONS, INC., a Washington 12 corporation; and DOES 1-10; and ROE ENTITIES 1-10, inclusive, 13 Defendants. 14 I, Christopher Hadnagy, declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of Washington 15 State as follows: 16 1. I am over the age of 18, and competent to testify to the matters set forth herein; and 17 make this declaration of my own personal knowledge. 18 2. I am the founder and CEO of Social-Engineer, LLC and the Innocent Lives 19 Foundation (ILF). ILF is a nonprofit organization dedicated to identifying anonymous child 20 predators through open-source intelligence, compiling conclusive reports, and providing them to 21 law enforcement to aid in bringing predators to justice. ILF also works to combat child sexual 22 abuse by educating parents and guardians on how to discuss online safety with their children. 23 Social-Engineer provides specialized security consulting services, assisting 3. DECLARATION OF CHRISTOPHER HADNAGY IN FREY BUCK SUPPORT OF PLAINTIFFS' RESPONSE TO 1200 FIFTH AVENUE, SUITE 1900

SEATTLE, WA 98101

P: (206) 486-8000 F: (206) 902-9660

DEFENDANTS' MOTION FOR SUMMARY

JUDGMENT - Page 1

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- 4. Social-Engineer also offers courses and seminars, that were designed in conjunction with a former FBI agent, on how attackers elicit private information in a non-threatening and unassuming manner. These courses have been taught to various entities, including U.S. Special Operations Command (SOCOM), the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, MI5, MI6, the Special Air Service (SAS), and the Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ), amongst many others. Before DEF CON 's actions giving rise to this case, these Social-Engineer's programs were widely recognized as leading resources in the field of social engineering.
 - 5. Since 2010, Social-Engineer has operated a dedicated "village," known as the Social Engineering Village or SE-Village, at the DEF CON "Hacking" Conference. The SE-Village was one of the conference's most popular attractions, offering specialized training and contests. Given the nature of Social-Engineer's work it hires people that are expert "social engineers.
 - 6. DEF CON, founded by Jeff Moss, is the world's largest security and hacking conference, held annually in Las Vegas. The conference attracts upwards of 30,000 people in attendance with a ticket price of \$460 in 2024.
 - 7. Def Con fosters a culture in which individuals—including Def Con leadership and staff—frequently operate under their online "handles" rather than their real names. This practice

DECLARATION OF CHRISTOPHER HADNAGY IN SUPPORT OF PLAINTIFFS' RESPONSE TO DEFENDANTS' MOTION FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT - Page 2 2:23-cv-01932-BAT FREY BUCK 1200 FIFTH AVENUE, SUITE 1900 SEATTLE, WA 98101 P: (206) 486-8000 F: (206) 902-9660

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extends to Def Con's founder, Jeff Moss, a cybersecurity expert and hacker widely known by his alias, "The Dark Tangent."

8. Def Con embraced anonymity to such an extent that, until only a few years ago, attendees could purchase tickets exclusively with cash, leaving no digital trace of their participation. Below is a snippetfrom Def Con's website explaining why the Conference uses cash:

How much is admission?

\$200.00 USD, Cash for all four days. Everyone pays the same: The government, the media, the 'well known hackers', the unknown script kiddies. The only discount is for Goons and speakers, who get to work without paying for the privilege. We only accept cash - no checks, no money orders, no travelers checks. We don't want to be a target of any State or Federal fishing expeditions.

https://defcon.org/html/defcon-20/dc-20-faq.html

- 9. The website also says "Paying in cash helps protect your privacy, and search warrants can't vacuum up PII we don't collect." https://defcon.org/html/defcon-30/dc-30-faq.html
- 10. The event is organized into specialized "villages," each focused on a distinct aspect of cybersecurity, hacking, or social engineering, and featuring discussions, hands-on challenges, and live demonstrations.
- 11. The conference floor is a dynamic mix of skilled hackers, cybersecurity professionals, state officials (both covert and overt), journalists, corporate representatives, and enthusiasts all engaging in discussions and demonstrations on hacking, counter-surveillance, and information warfare. Def Con is widely recognized for its unique environment, which presents notable security risks. The conference has also been historically known for its vibrant and, at times,

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- 12. Given my work with Def Con over the years, I know that department leads work year-round preparing for the conference, and are active participants in the community year round. Jeff Moss and some Def Con's department heads routinely monitor social media, engage in online discussions and chat via their handles, appearing on podcast interviews, and contribute to articles discussing security concerns and conference logistics. Of the notable social media sites where Def Con operates is its subreddit /Defcon ("community").
- 13. Jeff Moss goes by "DTangent" on reddit and is "moderator" on the Def Con community which means he monitors the community, can remove posts/comments from other users within the community, ban other users who break community rules from posting or commenting, and is free to run his community as he chooses. https://support.reddithelp.com/hc/en-us/articles/204533859-What-s-a-moderator





14. Moss is also frequently seen making comments in the community. For example, most recently, after the summary judgment was filed, Moss is seen directing the traffic for comments to be made within the Def Con community

DECLARATION OF CHRISTOPHER HADNAGY IN SUPPORT OF PLAINTIFFS' RESPONSE TO DEFENDANTS' MOTION FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT - Page 4 2:23-cv-01932-BAT FREY BUCK 1200 FIFTH AVENUE, SUITE 1900 SEATTLE, WA 98101 P: (206) 486-8000 F: (206) 902-9660

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9	DTangent • 8d ago					
	Let's use the other thread for comments because it got stared over the weekend:					
	https://www.reddit.com/r/Defcon/s/twJyMZbMBV					
	₩ 23 ₹5	Reply	₩ Award	⇔ Share		

https://www.reddit.com/r/Defcon/comments/1ix6qdj/comment/mek2nh3/?context=3

15. Another notable Def Con department leader that posts on the Def Con community is Kevin Sugihara- who goes by the handle Sugitime. Sugihara frequently posts of the Def Con community- introducing himself a the "Exhibitor department lead for Def Con." Attached hereto as **Exhibit 2 (Sugihara's Exhibitor Department Lead for Def Con).** He is now the "Director-Sales and Sponsorships" based on Def Con's org chart produced in discovery, and even online sources note the same: https://www.datanyze.com/companies/defcon/346580857

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DEFCON Executive Team & Key Decision Makers Name & Title Social Contact Info William Leonard in 🖾 Email 📞 Phone Chief of Staff Vidya Valbh 🖾 Email 📞 Phone Chief Information Officer Sammy Kaesa in 🖾 Email 🚷 Phone Chief Information Officer Kevin Sugihara 🖾 Email 📞 Phone Director, Sales & Sponsorships Nat Alonski in 🖾 Email 📞 Phone Monika Hathaway in 🖾 Email 📞 Phone Press Team Lead

16. Sugihara is a frequent social media presence for Def Con. He appears on podcast for Def Con:

a. "In this episode, we connect with Wednesday, Press Department Lead for DEF CON, and Kevin, the Village Lead/Vendor Lead responsible for organizing the numerous villages and vendors that take the floor (physically and virtually) during the event." https://www.itspmagazine.com/defcon-29-august-5th-8th-2021-las-

vegas-virtual

DECLARATION OF CHRISTOPHER HADNAGY IN SUPPORT OF PLAINTIFFS' RESPONSE TO DEFENDANTS' MOTION FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT - Page 6 2:23-cv-01932-BAT FREY BUCK 1200 FIFTH AVENUE, SUITE 1900 SEATTLE, WA 98101 P: (206) 486-8000 F: (206) 902-9660 b. Most recently on an episode for "StealthBay" "Let's Talk About Def Con-Kevin Sugihara." https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M-B6o7bX4-0

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- 17. Sugihara has also been an active contributor to Def Con's social media community on Reddit under the username 'sugitime.' As discussed above, Moss serves as the moderator of this forum. When users post questions directed at Def Con, Sugihara frequently responds, often using 'we' to imply his association with Def Con and speaking on its behalf.
- 18. Most recently, after the Summary Judgment pleadings were posted in the Def Con community, users questioned whether Def Con had, in fact, used convention space for stripper parties. In response, Sugihara stated:"



https://www.reddit.com/r/Defcon/comments/livo7x0/comment/mek37ej/?context=3;

19. Here additional examples to illustrate point: are some my https://www.reddit.com/r/Defcon/comments/1arxn89/been_to_defcon_13_now_a_father_of_a_c urious 9 yo/);

https://www.reddit.com/r/Defcon/comments/xa3kun/rdefcon 2023 badge prototype/

20. On September 8, 2022, Sugihara posted comments regarding this case on Def Con's reddit community- calling me "this industry's Weinstein" and a "serial sexual predator." Again, this is being done in the Def Con community that Moss is the moderator of.

sugitime · 6 days ago

Hagney is this industry's Weinstein, and it isn't a well kept secret amongst those in the industry. I personally know decision makers who have refused to do business with him for years because of his behavior.

Now he just takes his scum baggery to an all time low by using a lawsuit to pull out the names of people accused of harassing him. What a fucking sleezeball.



sugitime • 2y ago

Yeah dude you sound like you're defending a serial sexual predator. It's a pretty bad look, just saying.

https://www.reddit.com/r/Defcon/comments/x9m91r/more from the hadnagy v defcon moss

SE_000656, a reddit thread, titled "More from the Hadnagy v Defcon / Moss lawsuit – Discovery

21. Through discovery, we then discovered that he actually answered the initial email to Reynolds and was directly discussing the case with Moss via text message which is included as

Exhibit 2 and 17 to Conrad's Declaration.

DECLARATION OF CHRISTOPHER HADNAGY IN SUPPORT OF PLAINTIFFS' RESPONSE TO DEFENDANTS' MOTION FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT - Page 8 2:23-cv-01932-BAT

FREY BUCK 1200 FIFTH AVENUE, SUITE 1900 SEATTLE, WA 98101 P: (206) 486-8000 F: (206) 902-9660 I DECLARE UNDER PENALTY OF PERJURY UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF

DATED this 14th day of March 2025 in Orlando, Florida

WASHINGTON THAT THE FOREGOING IS TRUE AND CORRECT.

DECLARATION OF CHRISTOPHER HADNAGY IN SUPPORT OF PLAINTIFFS' RESPONSE TO DEFENDANTS' MOTION FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT - Page 9 2:23-cv-01932-BAT

FREY BUCK

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

The undersigned certifies under the penalty of perjury according to the laws of the United States and the State of Washington that on this date I caused to be served in the manner noted below a copy of this document entitled **DECLARATION OF CHRISTOPHER HADNAGY**

IN SUPPORT OF PLAINTIFFS' RESPONSE TO DEFENDANTS' MOTION FOR

SUMMARY JUDGEMENT on the following individuals:

6 David Perez, WSBA #43959

Matthew J. Mertens (Pro Hac Vice)

Lauren A. Trambley (Pro Hac Vice)

Perkins Coie LLP

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1201 Third Avenue, Suite 4900

Seattle, Washington 98101

dperez@perkinscoie.com

mmertens@perkinscoie.com

ltrambley@perkinscoie.com

[] Via USPS

[X] Via Electronic Mail

[] Via Electronic Filing (CM/ECF)

DATED this 14th day of March 2025 at Seattle, Washington.

Amber Holmes, Legal Assistant

DECLARATION OF CHRISTOPHER HADNAGY IN SUPPORT OF PLAINTIFFS' RESPONSE TO DEFENDANTS' MOTION FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT - Page 10 2:23-cv-01932-BAT FREY BUCK 1200 FIFTH AVENUE, SUITE 1900 SEATTLE, WA 98101 P: (206) 486-8000 F: (206) 902-9660

Exhibit 1

POLITICO

For U.S. officials, the world's largest hacking conference isn't all fun and games $% \left\{ 1,2,...,n\right\}$

The DEF CON hacking conference presents some very real risks, say current and former U.S. cybersecurity officials and conference regulars



Since the first-ever convention in 1993, DEF CON has brought some of the world's most talented computer security wizards into the Las Vegas desert. | Isaac Brekken/AP Photo

By JOHN SAKELLARIADIS and JOSEPH GEDEON 08/12/2023 07:00 AM EDT



LAS VEGAS - The easiest way to embarrass yourself at DEF CON, the annual Las Vegas confab of the world's largest collection of hackers: ending up on the Wall of Sheep.

The live, interactive display board lists the username and password of every attendee who's just committed the worst sin imaginable at a hacking conference - getting hacked.

Silly as the Wall of Sheep may sound, keeping your phone, tablet or laptop secure at DEF CON is no laughing matter. And that's especially true for the growing group of U.S. officials who travel West each August for the conference, named after the alert status the U.S. military uses to classify the threat of nuclear war.

When you spend three days with 30,000 people who love cracking code, you're always just one errant click away from sheep-dom. In fact, fending off the maze of Wi-Fi sniffers, hardware hackers and social engineers at DEF CON is a little like going toe-to-toe with elite, state-backed cyber spies, according to one senior State Department official.

"Almost treat it like going to China," said the official, granted anonymity to offer frank and colorful advice to a DEF CON first-timer. "Really treat it like going to a technologically sophisticated peer competitor."



For the first time, U.S. government lets hackers break into satellite in space $% \left\{ 1,2,\ldots,n\right\}$

BY JOSEPH GEDEON | AUGUST 11, 2023 04:25 PM

At this year's conference, which wraps up Sunday, the Wall of Sheep was

3/10/2025, 8:17 AM 1 of 4

Case 2:23-cv-01932-BAT Document 99 Filed 03/14/25 Page 13 of 86

located in a dimly lit auditorium off the main conference floor. It included, for the first time ever, a live feed with the location of individuals who were leaking data. As of Friday afternoon, there were at least 2,000 sheep at DEF CON, per the floor-to-ceiling projection. Their personal information was, mercifully, partly blacked out for privacy reasons.

Since the first-ever convention in 1993, DEF CON has brought some of the world's most talented computer security wizards into the Las Vegas desert to scour software, hardware and networking equipment in search of vulnerabilities

Operating under the principle that the best way to secure computer code is to expose it, attendees have demonstrated some truly jaw-dropping research over the last three decades. They've taken over the controls of cars, tricked ATMs to spew out cash and sent insulin pumps into overdrive, to name a few memorable hacks.

Advertisement

Feats like that have turned the convention into an increasingly common pit stop for top U.S. government officials, dozens of whom are in attendance this year. DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, CISA Director Jen Easterly and Acting National Cyber Director Kemba Walden are all in Las Vegas for DEF CON and Black Hat, its more corporate-friendly counterpart.

But the convention didn't earn its reputation as "the world's most hostile network" just because of what happens on the main stage.

"There is a criminal ecosystem out there," said Marc Rogers, the conference's head of security. "You probably don't want to access your corporate email over the DEF CON Wi-Fi."

One White House staffer who works on cyber issues said he received a security briefing before making the trek down to Vegas. The staffer, granted anonymity to speak openly about the briefing, said he was advised to turn off Bluetooth and Wi-Fi, to avoid bringing unnecessary devices, and, when possible, to use a Faraday bag - a pouch made of conductive metal that can block wireless signals from hitting your phone



White House sends hackers against the most powerful Als

Rogers also recommends bringing cash to the event. In part, that's because attendees in past years have snuck fake ATMs into DEF CON. It's also because on-site vendors refuse to use point-of-sale devices — which let consumers tap or insert a credit card, for example - for a simple reason: they don't trust

"PoS doesn't stand for Piece of Shit, ... but it probably should," said Monika Hathaway, the DEF CON staffer to whom a POLITICO reporter recently handed \$440 in cold hard cash, the price of admission into the conference

The several hundred red-shirted security staff like Hathaway who patrol the 550,000 square feet of Caesar's Forum are all volunteers - a sign of how many people find the event irresistible, despite the security risks. They even get their own official moniker: "goons."

In addition to its own vocabulary, DEF CON has given birth to its own games ("Spot the Fed"), its own swag (nothing here is as valuable as those \$440 badges) and its own fashion style, the type that encourages the non-Irish to wear kilts and at least one attendee to strap a Nintendo 64, TV and four controllers onto his back.

"DEF CON is as much about security as Comic-Con is about comic books," said Mick Baccio, the former chief information security officer for Democrat Pete Buttigieg's presidential campaign and, more recently, a goor

A host of non-cybersecurity events have sprung up at DEF CON. There is the tin foil hat contest, a martial arts competition and countless puzzles and trivia

2 of 4 3/10/2025, 8:17 AM On paper, the government brass that appear at DEF CON are there to recruit new talent or forge ties to the hacker community. But if you pry, it's clear that showing up to a place like this also is a welcome break from buttoned-up

"Most NSA folks would be more comfortable in a room full of DEF CON attendees than they would be at a traditional government event," said Rob Joyce, the director of the NSA's Cybersecurity Directorate

Joyce, who has attended multiple DEF CONs, said that the technical nature of the conferences meshes well with the work of the National Security Agency. And judging by six bullet points and several hundred words that Joyce — one of the country's most important cyber officials — emailed POLITICO, it's clear he means it.



Government watchdog finds U.S. embassies running software vulnerable to attacks BY MAGGIE MILLER AND BETSY WOODRUFF SWAN | AUGUST 04, 2023 03:13 PM

DEF CON is "the happiest place in the world," added Chris Inglis, the nation's first national cyber director, who stepped down in February.

For some, the security risks facing U.S. officials aren't even all they are cracked

"They'll tell you to turn off your phone, but I don't really think that's an issue," said Chris Krebs, the former director of the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency.

Basic measures, like turning off Wi-Fi and Bluetooth, can significantly reduce the risk of getting hacked, while many modern mobile applications now come with stronger built-in security than they once did. Moreover, with so many U.S. government officials now in regular attendance, it's not uncommon to hear that the conference has lost some of its original edge.

Perhaps. But that doesn't seem to have dampened the mood for many of this year's attendees.

"The event is much more content-focused and much less party focused" than it once was, said Rogers, the DEF CON security lead. "But the parties are still pretty epic."

FILED UNDER: CYBER SECURITY, NSA, HACKING, ALEJANDRO MAYORKAS,



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DEF CON is Not a Conference for the Faint of Heart

Early on the morning of July 16, 2001 Russian programmer Dmitry Sklyarov left his Las Vegas hotel room with nothing more pressing on his mind than getting a bite to eat before his flight back to Moscow.

Instead, he walked into the waiting handcuffs of a team of FBI agents sent to arrest him for violations of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA), making him the first person ever to be arrested under that law. The Russian company that Sklyarov worked for, Elcomsoft, had written and published, in Russia, a program that could circumvent the protections placed on ebook files created by Adobe and other vendors. Sklyarov was one of a handful of programmers that had worked on the software. The Feds couldn't reach Elcomsoft, but they could nab Sklyarov as long as he was in the United States.

How had they known where and who he was?

Skylarov had developed some expertise in the encryption methods used in the ebook formats Elcomsoft had cracked. As a service to the security community, he'd come to Las Vegas to give a presentation on how exactly those techniques had been circumvented, pointing out the weaknesses to other programmers and cybersecurity professionals so they could avoid similar pitfalls.

Case 2:23-cv-01932-BAT Document 99 Filed 03/14/25 Page 18 of 86 And he'd done it at DEF CON, a hacker convention swarming with all stripes of hackers, federal agents, and security professionals engaged in fun, games, and serious security research that happens every year under the stark desert sun. The FBI and any other national security agency interested in the event—which is all of them—knew right where to find him.

It was just another moment of drama at a conference that is filled with both tension and entertainment. The incident showcased some of the major players and controversies in the cybersecurity field, something that DEF CON does every year.

DEF CON Brings Cybersecurity and Hijinks to Sin City

DEF CON is not a conference for the faint of heart. Past attendees have had their ATM cards skimmed, (https://www.theregister.co.uk/2009/08/03/fake_atm_scam_busted_at_defcom/) cell phones hacked, (https://venturebeat.com/2014/08/06/rule-1-at-black-hat-defcon-mobile-devices-stay-in-your-hotel-room/) been fired by their employers, (http://www.zdnet.com/article/salesforce-fires-red-team-staffers-who-gave-defcon-talk/) or been kicked out and heckled along the way as suspected reporters (https://www.wired.com/2007/08/media-mole-at-d/). It's pretty much assumed that if you fire up a wireless device of any sort within a 10-mile radius, your packets are going to get sniffed.

Ninety percent of the time, it's all fun and games—hackers hack, and when you go to a hacker convention, hacking is the whole point. In fact, the official show badges (https://www.defcon.org/html/links/dc-badge.html) are often hackable by design, part of the annual Badge Challenge contest. But the games aren't restricted to the badges, as the Wall of Sheep each year demonstrates. A huge video screen at the conference, the Wall of Sheep is constantly refreshed with the address, login, and partial password of systems that have been exploited from the conference floor.

Despite the heavy presence of federal agents and law enforcement at the event—so heavy that a game called "Spot The Fed" has become a prominent part of the conference—this outright illegality is typically overlooked as part of an uneasy truce between hackers and officers. As the Sklyarov arrest demonstrated, sometimes that truce is broken by one side or the other.

More recently, the feds also used DEF CON to nab British researcher Marcus Hutchins in 2017 on hacking charges (https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2017/aug/03/researcher-who-stopped-wannacry-ransomware-detained-in-us). And a flurry of injunctions are almost inevitable prior to major presentations that might expose security holes in major pieces of software. Cisco, the Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority, and HBGary Federal have all sued to prevent researchers from exposing gaps in their security systems at the conference.

From Humble Beginnings To A Fixture In The Hacking Community

DEF CON was started by an unassuming fellow named Jeff Moss, better known in hacking circles as The Dark Tangent. His handle was taken from a FIDONET board that he ran, and what turned into DEF CON originated simply as a party for a fellow BBS operator who was moving and had to shut down his node. When the other organizer didn't show up, Moss simply invited all his other hacker friends to Las Vegas in 1993 and everyone had a blast.

In fact, they enjoyed it so much that everyone implored Moss to make it a regular thing. Moss had run a popular hacking board but also had plenty of contacts on the corporate side of cybersecurity from his job with Ernst and Young's Information System Security division. Having made a name for himself in both the white and black hat communities, it only made sense to bring everyone together and make it an annual event.

Case 2:23-cv-01932-BAT Document 99 Filed 03/14/25 Page 19 of 86 The conference has been held there every year ever since, growing to an estimated 25,000 attendees in 2017.

Moss decided to call it DEF CON partly as an homage to the classic inspirational hacker movie, "War Games" and partly as a tip of the hat to phone phreakers (DEF is the number 3 on a telephone keypad) with "con," of course, being a common shorthand for "convention."

But if the nomenclature is typical of conferences, other aspects of DEF CON are not. You can't pre-register for the conference because proof of identification is not required and many attendees prefer to use hacker handles or pseudonyms. You have to buy tickets at the event and only cash is accepted, both to avoid fraud and to avoid accumulating information that law enforcement could subpoena. And you're likely to hear in various places throughout the year that DEF CON has been cancelled. It hasn't. Hackers just like a joke.

It's possible to get a press pass to DEF CON, but it's work to keep it—the conference has strict rules on preserving the anonymity of attendees. Catching an uncovered face in the distance in the background of an interview piece can and has resulted in summary removal from the conference.

Even more coveted is the famous Black Badge—an award offered to some contest winners or other attendees with major accomplishments performed at the conference. A Black Badge allows free entry to DEF CON for life.

Serious Cybersecurity Work Happens In The Shadows at DEF CON

DEF CON has come to offer an open venue for big security breakthroughs. The Cult of the Dead Cow released their Back Orifice 2000 Windows hacking tool at DEF CON 7 and set the stage for annual presentations of big, ground shaking exploit or hacking tool announcements.

Keynotes have been delivered by such varied luminaries as chess master Garry Kasparov and head of the National Security Agency Director Keith Alexander. Presentations on every security topic imaginable are on offer, and contests such as DARPA's Cyber Grand Challenge have resulted in major breakthroughs in automated security software. A WiFi shootout competition in the desert in 2005 resulted in a record-breaking 125-mile wireless network connection.

Like all big cons, a variety of ancillary activities have sprung up around it to cater to special interest attendees.

- **DEF CON Shoot** Every year a group of hackers and guns head for the hills outside of town to geek out on firearms and shooting techniques.
- **DEF CON Toxic BBQ** A gathering of grill masters and foodies in a park somewhere in the Las Vegas area to hack together some truly amazing food.
- Hacker Jeopardy A trivia contest covering the kind of random facts that geeks often know, such as UNIX Bugs, Famous Hacker Busts, and the size of, uh, equipment owned by famous porn stars.
- Spot The Fed An ongoing contest to pick out federal agents from among fellow attendees.
- Capture The Flag One of the longest running and most heavily contested events, this isn't the traditional hide and seek game played in the woods, but a series of hacking challenges played between teams.

Besides these, there are always informal and sometimes impromptu contests for picking locks, hacking mobile devices, or sometimes just drinking contests.

Recently, the con has incorporated focus villages to concentrate on various aspects of hacking, such as:

- Wireless Hacking
- Car Hacking
- Voting Machine Hacking

Security vendors have also become prominent at the conference, both to hawk their wares and to receive feedback from the folks who are busily trying to break them.

Although the conference has been questioned and sometimes condemned, it's unlikely to go away anytime soon. The interaction, both among independent security researchers and between them and their corporate or law enforcement counterparts, is simply too valuable, and the value grows with the increasing onslaught of cybercrime. Hacking outside the conference has become a significant threat to the stability of commerce and communication systems. DEF CON remains the one venue in which such serious matters can be openly debated in an atmosphere of fun and exploration.

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Exhibit 2





Thoughts on DEF CON Exhibitors from the Exhibitors Department Lead...

Hey Reddit,

My name is Kevin. I'm the Exhibitors department lead for DEF CON. I was unfortunately called away to handle an emergency during closing ceremonies, so I didn't get a chance to speak about the new Exhibitors dept. DT did a great job covering the slides for me, but there was just a bit more I wanted to add, and hoped this would get around to a few more people...

Exhibitors was a really difficult idea for DEF CON. Not because it is unique in some way (I mean let's face it, in its execution, it essentially boiled down to just a tradeshow booth). It was difficult because losing the trust of the DEF CON staff, goons, and attendees would be incredibly devistating for me personally, and I could not let that happen. If I wanted to do Exhibitors, I didn't get two chances; it had to be right the first time.

I'll spare you the boring story of every iteration of 'what is an Exhbitor?' I went through during the inception of the department, and I'll skip to the end; An exhibitor at DEF CON had to be, above all else, respectful of the DEF CON culture. It was my job, and the job of my 2nd u/polybius-2600, to help guide our Exhibitors into the DEF CON culture. During a call with one exhibitor, I actually said to them "You have to be prepared for anything here. You may just have someone fly a quad-copter over your booth and drop dildos on you. It's just DEF CON things." If they didn't laugh at that (which they did!), I knew they couldn't handle being at DEF CON. In the same vein, if anyone asked me things like when they would receive 'attendee data', I simply ended the call and directed them to the DEF CON documentary. If you thought we even collected data, let alone would sell it, you clearly don't know DEF CON.

In the end, our Exhibitors also placed quite a bit of trust in me and my team, to bring them to an event where industry standard return-on-investment metrics had no place. I had one exhibitor walk through the venue on Wednesday night and ask me "Why aren't we in the vendor room? It's so much bigger!" and the only thing I could say was "Just trust me." I don't know if any of the exhibitors will read this, but if you do, I also want to thank you for that trust as well. I know it couldn't have been easy. But by Friday afternoon every Exhbitor I spoke with was telling me that DEF CON was such an amazing event. They loved the antics and the crowd and were just as caught up in the energy of it all. They couldn't wait to come back next year.

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The second most important thing to both DT and myself was that every cent that was brought in to the Exhibitor department was re-invested into DEF CON. But not just replacing existing expenses with money from Exhibitors; we wanted to spent on actual new things. If you recall from the closing slides, we brought in \$160k. Of that money, \$20k went *directly* to charities, \$24k went to throwing *new* parties; not funding existing parties. And then about \$80k went to providing our content creators with coins they could exchange for food. All of these were brand new expenses paid for by Exhibitors. And to that end, I will always strive for transparency in the Exhibitor budget, because I want every attendee to know that we aren't selling out for a payday; we're bringing in more money for our attendees and our content creators. (Btw, the rest of the money was used for startup costs like the booths, room setup, equipment, etc.)

In my thank you's in the program, I thanked the DEF CON staff, my (and really all) goons, and the exhibitors. But I actually didn't thank the most important group; DEF CON attendees.

Thank you for giving me your trust to not just 'make DEF CON another RSA'. And if you didn't give me your trust, that's fair too, I respect that. Before DEF CON, I received many messages and calls from personal friends saying "wtf? what are you doing to DEF CON???", so if some of my closest friends can feel that way, I dont fault you for feeling that way either. But since DEF CON started, I've gotten overwhelmingly positive feedback about all of our Exhibitors and the execution of the concept as a whole (which once again, I literally could not have done without u/polybius-2600). So thank you to everyone who went into the Exhibitors room with an open mind.

And you know what, if you still hate the idea and can't *stand* DEF CON having exhibitors, I'll still thank you, in advance, for giving me constructive feedback and explaining your position to me so that even if we can't fix everything you hate about it, we can still take steps towards making DEF CON a better place for our attendees, content creators, and Exhibitors; in that order.

Feel free to DM me or post any questions here. This isn't exactly an AMA (some info is just not mine to share), but I'll always strive for transparency.

Thank you everyone!

Kevin

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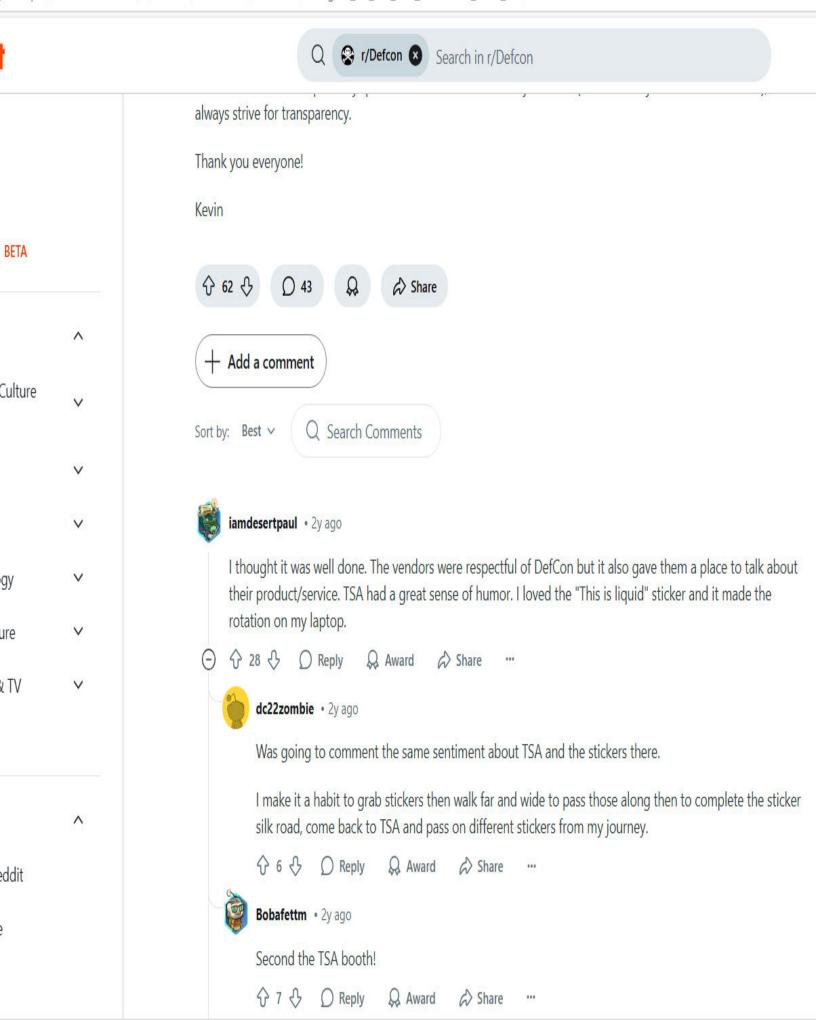
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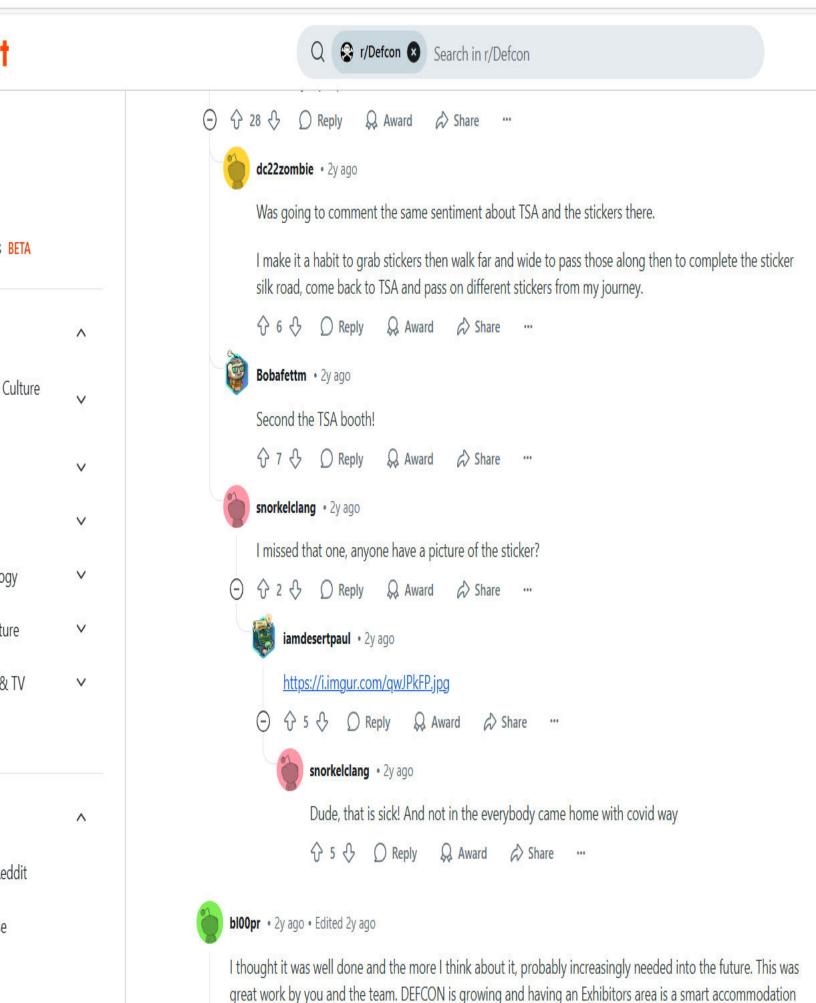
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bl00pr • 2y ago • Edited 2y ago

I thought it was well done and the more I think about it, probably increasingly needed into the future. This was great work by you and the team. DEFCON is growing and having an Exhibitors area is a smart accommodation for this growth that serves to protect other parts of the event. If some chunk of the DEFCON-going population is disinterested in being marketed to, they have the option to avoid the area wholly which is something they may not have had in the past.

I think the call for exhibitors worded it pretty nicely and defined it broadly, after seeing the Exhibitors at the event, it seems as if the types of Exhibitors roughly break out into:

- Companies hiring/recruiting
- Companies promoting a product (but not directly selling) to DEFCON attendees directly (e.g. HackTheBox subscriptions)
- Companies promoting a product to DEFCON attendees based on the DEFCON attendee's employment (i.e. Enterprise vendors)
- Educational Institutions

I did notice there was a bit of overlap between the Exhibitors Area and Vendors Area, it was not significant and may not have been identifiable in planning. Examples include:

- SecOps Group (Vendors Area) did not seem to be conducting transactions but rather giving out prizes in exchange for attendees providing their email for further marketing. This would seem to be more appropriate for the Exhibitors area.
- One of the Exhibitors seemed to be selling T-Shirts at some point.

I don't think either of these were a problem, but as the Exhibitor area evolves, maybe there are a few defined parameters or boundaries for this type of activity (e.g. Exhibitors cannot conduct transactions, otherwise they are a Vendor or Vendors must conduct transactions, etc.), this may allow the group to be most correctly sorted between Vendors and Exhibitors.

Lastly, TSA and BHIS tables occasionally seemed to be challenging from a crowd perspective on Friday. Probably because stickers and other swag. I'd definitely take this into account for the coming year, probably just a lesson learned on placement, the BHIS table was especially challenging because their line of 2-3 tables were slightly angled inwards, so as people approached, they were ever-so-slightly funneled, and this made it



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Also, the TSA Peanut Butter "I am a liquid" sticker was amazing...



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These are great points. To address some of the reasons for cross over:

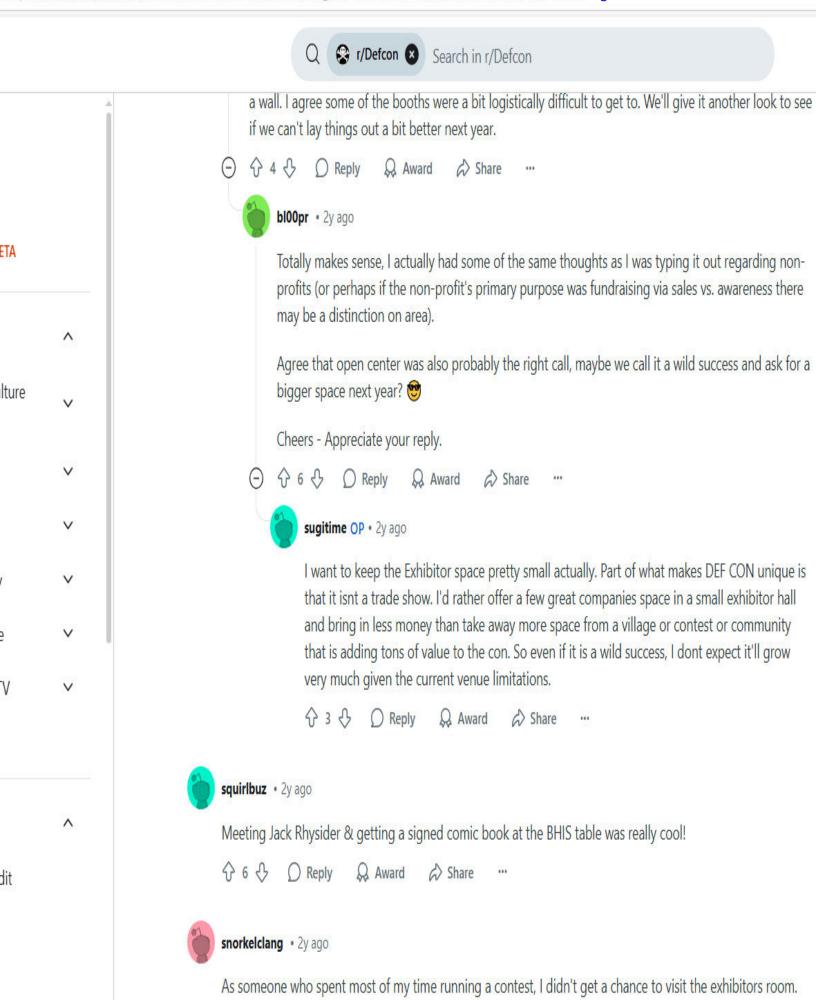
We typically give pretty heavy discounts and/or free booths in the vendor room to non-profits. If you saw someone in the Vendor area and were thinking to yourself "they probably should have been an exhibitor", its almost definitely because they are a non-profit.

We did not stop Exhibitors from selling items, and probably wont tbh. Even though the exhibitor room carries some expectation of free swag, the exhibitor selling t-shirts (who had previously been in the vendor room) reported that this was their best year ever and they were definitely coming back as an exhibitor each year moving forward. I did hear a few comments like "who sells free swag?" and similar things, from close friends actually, but in the end it seemed to work out for everyone.

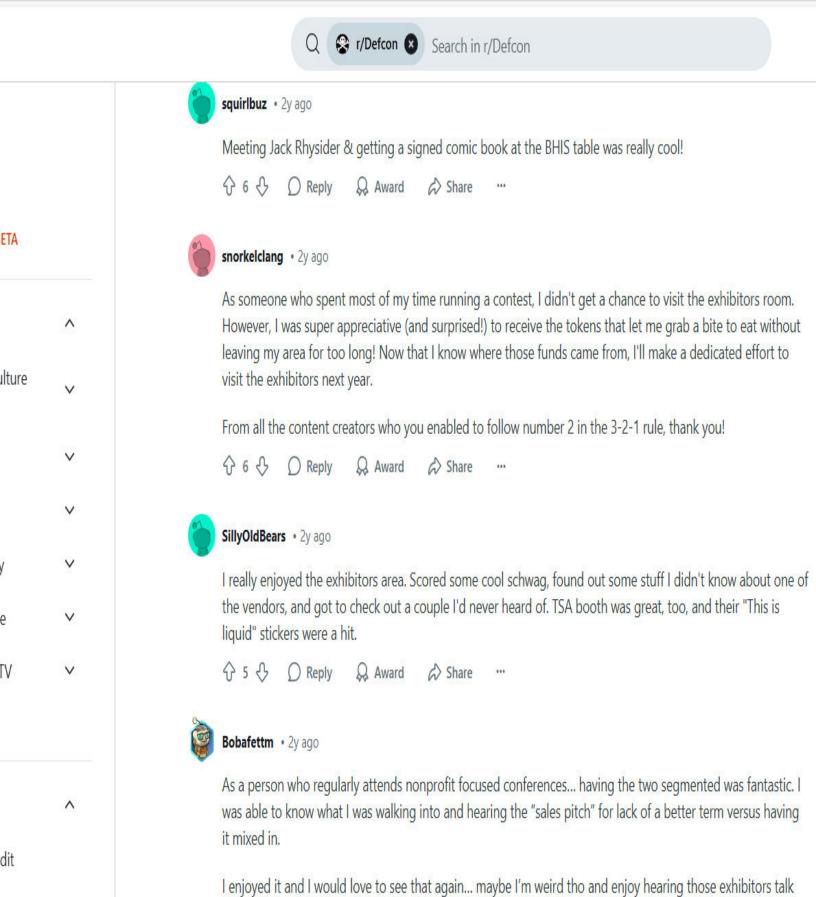
We were originally going to have an island in the middle where all of the 10x10 booths were going to float. We did a last minute audible into having an open middle floor plan and putting every booth against a wall. I agree some of the booths were a bit logistically difficult to get to. We'll give it another look to see if we can't lay things out a bit better next year.



Totally makes sense, I actually had some of the same thoughts as I was typing it out regarding non-profits (or perhaps if the non-profit's primary purpose was fundraising via sales vs. awareness there may be a distinction on area).



However, I was super appreciative (and surprised!) to receive the tokens that let me grab a bite to eat without



about what they are trying to accomplish whether it was paid for education or something like the TSA booth.

Awesome job!

(Who 100% brought the right attitude)



renjoyed it and rwould love to see that again... maybe i m welld tho and enjoy nearing those exhibitors talk about what they are trying to accomplish whether it was paid for education or something like the TSA booth. (Who 100% brought the right attitude)

Awesome job!

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[deleted] • 2y ago

I really liked seeing an academic cybersecurity club get to come represent. I know that's not going to be an opinion everyone shares because universities can be a magnet for or themselves be near the apex of unethical behavior, but for an academic club to show up, tools in hand ready to sell, I thought that was pretty awesome. I've already used it to help my young kids visualize radio signals throughout our home to show them how these wireless devices communicate with each other. That club likely had to do a fair share of fundraising to enable them to make those devices plus all trip related expenses. They worked for it.

Maybe I caught feels because I founded my college's cybersecurity club and ran it as president, then went on to create and lead the CTF team. I had a LOT of face to face time with our professor who endorsed the club to plan out meeting SGA requirements and put together presentations to give to the SGA body on what we'd done. I couldn't imagine how proud I'd be to go back to my college and tell them WE FUCKING DID DEFCON. I spoke with their professor about this for a while and he became like my professor for a weekend, only he handed me a cerveza during the Saturday night evacuation, which was an immediate upgrade.

I'd love to see more academic cybersecurity clubs in the future, given they bring something to offer to the community, hardware or software, to showcase what they're working on and how they're actually doing the thing. It's a big deal for a club to represent at DefCon, so I think there's an opportunity there to make a difference for these small clubs. I feel a criterion might need to be established to ensure that the opportunity for a slot like that isn't handed out to these high profit, high expense, bougie universities every single year whose club members might not benefit as much as the community colleges and small technical colleges out there.

How was Capitol Tech University selected to have that booth? Is the plan to extend one slot to an academic cybersecurity club every year? Are there any thoughts of having the schools nominated for the slot by a club member who might already have DefCon on their radar, and selecting a school from that nomination list based on what they can bring to DefCon that will bring more value to attendees?

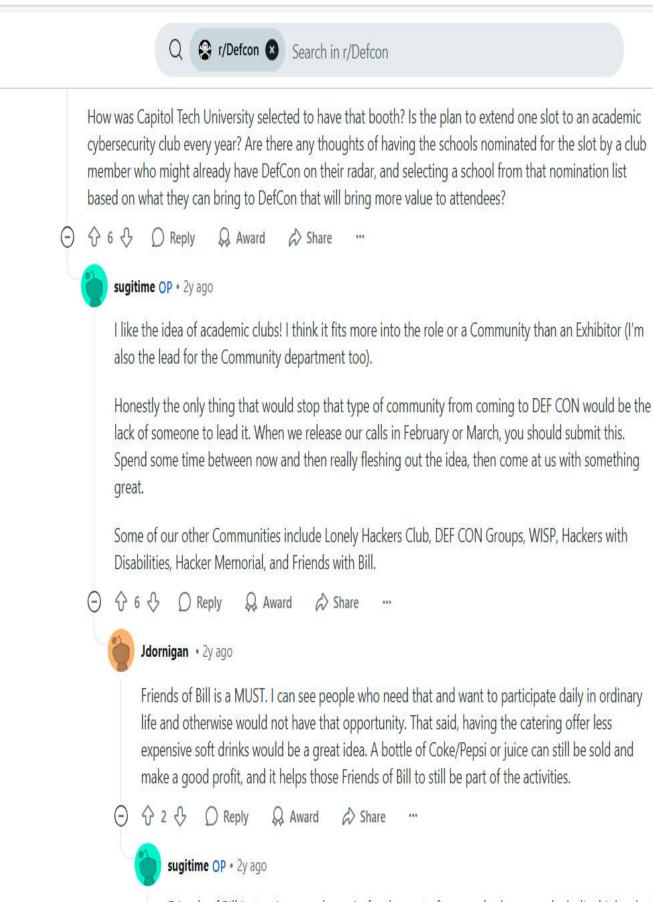
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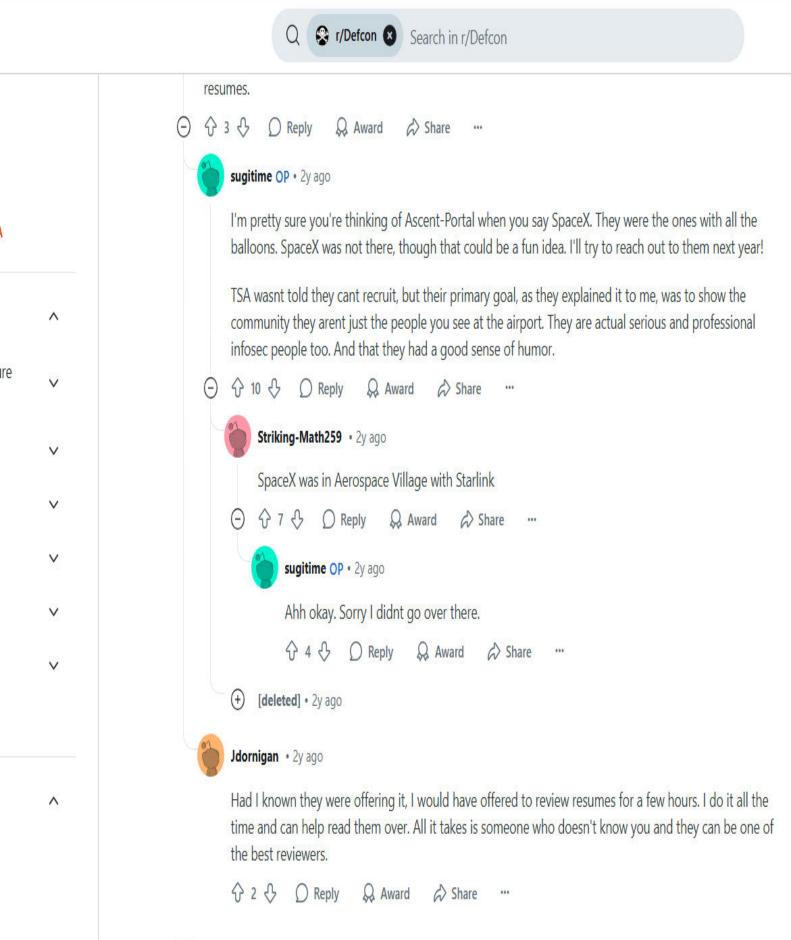
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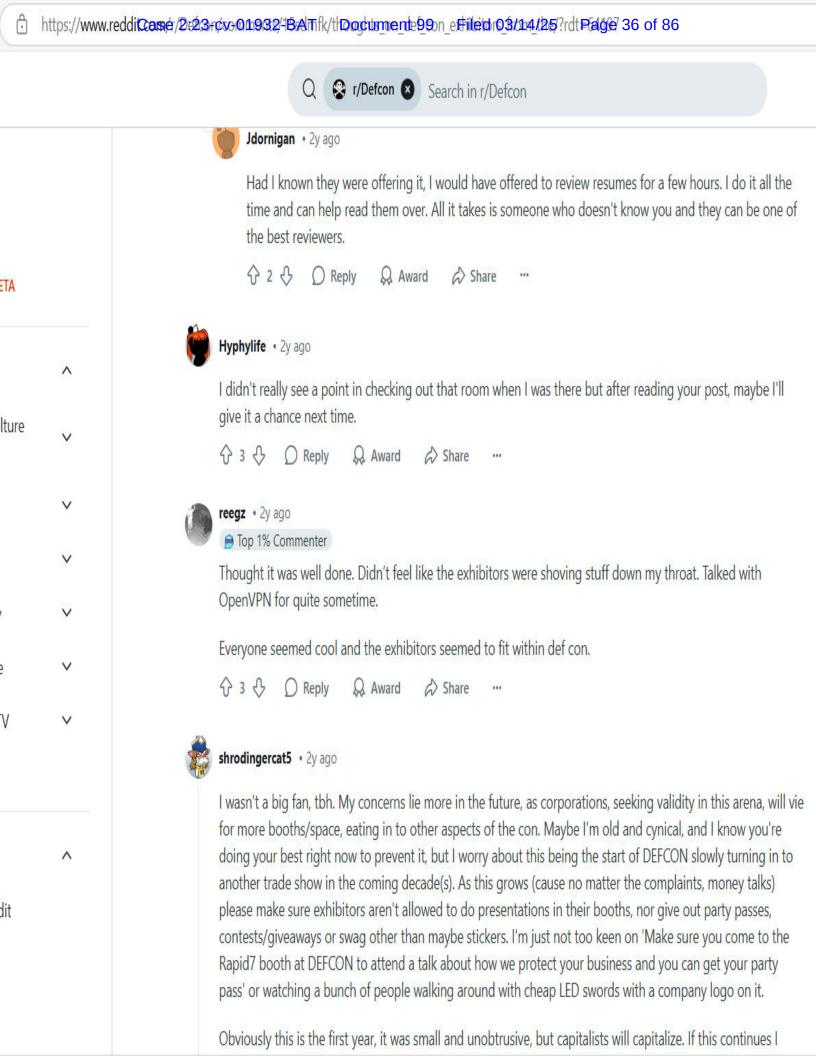
Friends of Bill isnt going anywhere. As for the cost of pop and other non-alcoholic drinks, that isnt really something we have control over. There is free water everywhere, and people can bring water bottles. I guess thats the best we can do about less expensive drinks. Sorry about that!

community they arent just the people you see at the airport. They are actual serious and professional

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Hyphylife • 2y ago





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shrodingercat5 • 2y ago

I wasn't a big fan, tbh. My concerns lie more in the future, as corporations, seeking validity in this arena, will vie for more booths/space, eating in to other aspects of the con. Maybe I'm old and cynical, and I know you're doing your best right now to prevent it, but I worry about this being the start of DEFCON slowly turning in to another trade show in the coming decade(s). As this grows (cause no matter the complaints, money talks) please make sure exhibitors aren't allowed to do presentations in their booths, nor give out party passes, contests/giveaways or swag other than maybe stickers. I'm just not too keen on 'Make sure you come to the Rapid7 booth at DEFCON to attend a talk about how we protect your business and you can get your party pass' or watching a bunch of people walking around with cheap LED swords with a company logo on it.

Obviously this is the first year, it was small and unobtrusive, but capitalists will capitalize. If this continues I hope you keep it small and extremely limited and capped at a few booths.

Also, to be frank, it kinda sucks having to walk so far for some of the villages but exhibitors get a room right in the center, even though the con is ostensibly about the community. Could that space have been better used for a different village and put exhibitors in Flamingo, say? I understand that exhibitors wouldn't want to do that, but guess what, neither do the villages and they don't have a say.





sugitime OP • 2y ago

These are really great concerns, and ones I have always kept on the forefront of my mind.

So we do allow exhibitors to sponsor parties, but if they do, they have to be 100% open to all DEF CON attendees. You cannot require an invite or anything like that.

Exhibitors cannot buy their spots onto a stage of any kind. You may think money talks, but if you knew the amounts of money we have turned down just for a talk, you'd know that money might talk, but that doesn't mean we listen.

Exhibitors can do giveaways and contests. I'd be curious to hear more about why you think this isnt a good idea. I thought it was a very consensual way for Exhibitors to engage with attendees. But feel free to

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This year was small, but I dont anticipate it ever getting much larger than it was. Maybe we add another small room and add one more exhibitor, or just spread out a bit. But I want to make sure it never becomes a very large part of our conference.

As for the distances, ill just be real honest. If Exhibitors were not in the spot they were, it wouldn't have meant 4 villages could move to Forum. There just isnt space for the villages. And as for moving one village to Forum and Exhibitor somewhere else, you got me there. Location is just a concession that we have to make. In the grand scheme of things, I think its a pretty small concession to make though. We fed a thousand content creators for a weekend at the expense of some folks having to walk to Flamingo for a village. I think that's a pretty fair price.

Thanks for the feedback though! It is always welcome, and I for sure want to hear more about your perspective around the giveaways. Maybe we choose not to allow those.



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shrodingercat5 • 2y ago

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I'm not a fan because its exclusionary (some people cant sign up due to employers, etc) and requires you to give something up (email, phone, whatever) to receive some gift, even if they're giving stuff away for free without needing to collect anything, that stuff is typically (imo) tacky. If people want free tshirts BlackHat is just up the street and a hall pass is cheaper than defcon.

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Good. Is this codified somewhere or is defcon reliant on you being the leader for this, what happens if someone else with different values than you takes over? I personally think you did a good job this year, I'm just more concerned about what happens if this gets really popular in the coming years as BlackHat is oversaturated and this gives companies an opportunity they wouldn't have at BlackHat since its so small, for now.

As for the distances, ill just be real honest. If Exhibitors were not in the spot they were, it wouldn't have meant 4 villages could move to Forum. There just isn't space for the villages. And as for moving one village to Forum and Exhibitor somewhere else, you got me there. Location is just a concession that we have to make. In the grand scheme of things, I think its a pretty small concession to make though. We fed a thousand content creators for a weekend at the expense of some folks having to walk to Flamingo for a village. I think that's a pretty fair price.

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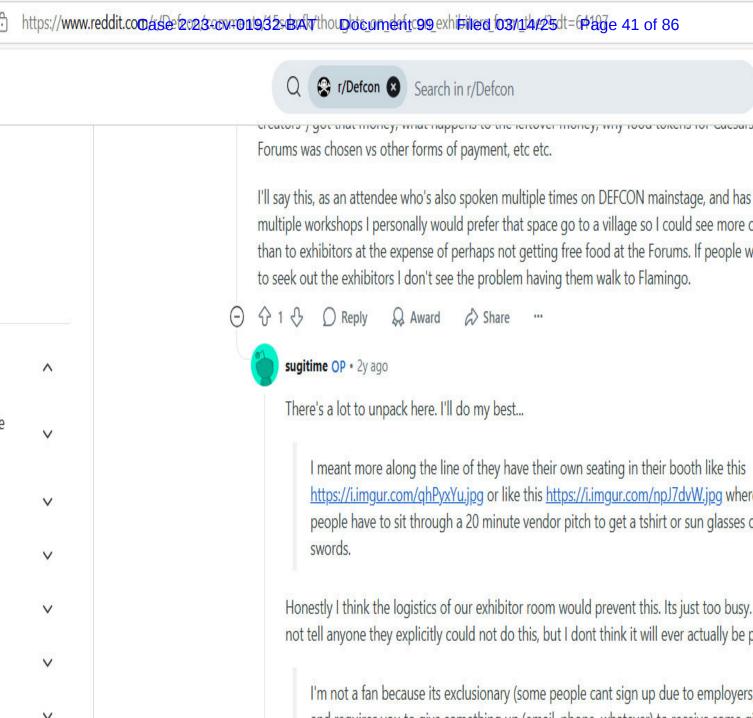
Main stage speakers/instructors get an honorarium of either cash or badges they can then sell, and get a free room, food tokens are just an added benefit they didn't have previously. Speakers in the villages do not, to my understanding, get speaker perks of any kind. Or maybe I was unaware and the food tokens were also given to speakers in the villages, if thats the case then maybe I'm wrong. I do wonder, though, if that money could be better used to bring in people who could otherwise not afford to attend defcon as scholarships etc. See my questions below about transparency.

I have a few questions about the tokens now that I think about it:

- 1. Were you able, at any point, to convert the tokens to cash or where they only valid for food at the Caesars Forums? Where they usable at other Caesars venues? I know a few vendors were accepting them as well.
- 2. What happens to all the money that was tied up in unused tokens now that the con is over? Does it go in to next years pool? Donated? Are there any numbers of how much was used vs unused.
- 3. I've seen the '1,000 content creators' mentioned a few times, and perhaps i missed it during the closing ceremonies, but whats the breakdown of that 1,000?

Maybe more transparency would help naysayers like myself be more comfortable with if it was clearer how the money was spent, who (not specifically, but less general than "a thousands content creators") got that money, what happens to the leftover money, why food tokens for Caesars Forums was chosen vs other forms of payment, etc etc.

I'll say this, as an attendee who's also spoken multiple times on DEFCON mainstage, and has taught multiple workshops I personally would prefer that space go to a village so I could see more content tally and the first transfer of transfer of the first transfer of tr



I'll say this, as an attendee who's also spoken multiple times on DEFCON mainstage, and has taught multiple workshops I personally would prefer that space go to a village so I could see more content than to exhibitors at the expense of perhaps not getting free food at the Forums. If people wanted to seek out the exhibitors I don't see the problem having them walk to Flamingo.



I meant more along the line of they have their own seating in their booth like this https://i.imgur.com/qhPyxYu.jpg or like this https://i.imgur.com/npJ7dvW.jpg where people have to sit through a 20 minute vendor pitch to get a tshirt or sun glasses or led

Honestly I think the logistics of our exhibitor room would prevent this. Its just too busy. I did not tell anyone they explicitly could not do this, but I dont think it will ever actually be possible.

I'm not a fan because its exclusionary (some people cant sign up due to employers, etc) and requires you to give something up (email, phone, whatever) to receive some gift, even if they're giving stuff away for free without needing to collect anything, that stuff is typically (imo) tacky. If people want free tshirts BlackHat is just up the street and a hall pass is cheaper than defcon.

We may have to agree to disagree on this one. Giving your email for a chance to win something cool is not exclusionary. You may choose to exclude yourself from this chance, but that's on you, and its your right, and we support it.

Good. Is this codified somewhere or is defcon reliant on you being the leader for this, what happens if someone else with different values than you takes over? I personally think you did a good job this year, I'm just more concerned about what happens if this



Good. Is this codified somewhere or is defcon reliant on you being the leader for this, what happens if someone else with different values than you takes over? I personally think you did a good job this year, I'm just more concerned about what happens if this gets really popular in the coming years as BlackHat is oversaturated and this gives companies an opportunity they wouldn't have at BlackHat since its so small, for now.

No it is not codified anywhere. Its been in the conversations DT and I have had since the start of Exhibitors. So yes, I suppose if both DT and I were no longer in leadership roles with DEF CON, it could change. But I'll be honest, if DT is not in a leadership role at DEF CON, maybe Exhibitors isnt the biggest concern.

Main stage speakers/instructors get an honorarium of either cash or badges they can then sell, and get a free room, food tokens are just an added benefit they didn't have previously. Speakers in the villages do not, to my understanding, get speaker perks of any kind. Or maybe I was unaware and the food tokens were also given to speakers in the villages, if thats the case then maybe I'm wrong. I do wonder, though, if that money could be better used to bring in people who could otherwise not afford to attend defcon as scholarships etc. See my questions below about transparency.

Main stage/speakers were not the beneficiaries of the Exhibitor funds. Nothing was added to their 'care package'. Content creators, specifically Village and Contests, have previously not received food tokens from DEF CON, and that was something we did this year. We'll continue to figure out the best ways to support our content creators, and everything from Exhibitors will go towards that. We have discussed 'scholarship programs', but there are issues regarding who gets selected, how they get selected, criteria, a perception of bias by the community (even if no real bias exists), and many other issues. Supporting those who already come to DEF CON and already make it great seemed like the best decision for us this year.

I have a few questions about the tokens now that I think about it:

Were you able, at any point, to convert the tokens to cash or where they only valid for food at the Caesars Forums? Where they usable at other Caesars venues? I know a few vendors were accepting them as well.

What hannens to all the money that was tied up in unused tokens now that the con is

Q 😵 r/Defcon 🛭 Search in r/Defcon

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What happens to all the money that was tied up in unused tokens now that the con is over? Does it go in to next years pool? Donated? Are there any numbers of how much was used vs unused.

I've seen the '1,000 content creators' mentioned a few times, and perhaps i missed it during the closing ceremonies, but whats the breakdown of that 1,000?

- 1. Tokens could not be turned into cash, and they could be used at Caesar's forums for food at the Chillout Lounge or drinks at the bars. Fun fact, the most popular use I heard about was simply the villages thinking they were cool souvenirs for their volunteers. They were extremely well received by the content creators.
- 2. The money was spent to pay Caesars. We have to pay for a certain amount of food, and we do. Those coins were essentially coupons to redeem food we already purchased. So it does not go into a pool next year, as it was spent this year.
- 3. I dont know how to answer this. Do you want like, a list of their names? That's for sure not happening, as I'm sure you can appreciate haha. We had about 1000 contest/village badges this year (not exactly, but roughly) and I gave out enough tokens to offer food to each of them for the length of their contest/village. For example, if your contest had 4 badges given to them and was running Friday/Saturday, you received \$44 per badge per day. I genuinely am unsure how to be more transparent about this, but if you had specifics that did not jeopardize anyone's personal information, you can ask.

Maybe more transparency would help naysayers like myself be more comfortable with if it was clearer how the money was spent, who (not specifically, but less general than "a thousands content creators") got that money, what happens to the leftover money, why food tokens for Caesars Forums was chosen vs other forms of payment, etc etc.



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I struggle to see how I could be any more transparent, but if you tell me how, I'll try. I think I answered your example questions, outside "why were food tokens chosen", which was that among the different options we could think of, this benefited the most content creators. We considered maybe sponsoring villages with \$XXXX money, but found that the actual division of money would be less than most villages bottom tier sponsorship tiers. If we only gave money to some content creators, it resulted in a perception of bias. We thought about paying for hotel rooms, but again ended up in a spot where we could barely get 1 room per content/village, so the benefit just seemed too low. Food tokens were identified as the most impactful difference we could make in our content creator's experience at DEF CON, and it was very, very well received by our content creators.

I'll say this, as an attendee who's also spoken multiple times on DEFCON mainstage, and has taught multiple workshops I personally would prefer that space go to a village so I could see more content than to exhibitors at the expense of perhaps not getting free food at the Forums. If people wanted to seek out the exhibitors I don't see the problem having them walk to Flamingo.

I respect your opinion, and I'll say that this will just have to be a point we disagree on. Exhibitors would not come to DEF CON if they were placed in Flamingo, and so we have to make some concessions.

The most important thing to me is that you can read my comments here and know that I'll always be upfront about things, and never feel like you were left feeling like I tried to 'sneak one by you'. I said it at the start of this thread and I'll say it again, I'll be transparent with you. And to that end, Exhibitors is very unlikely to ever not be at a premium spot in the Forum. It won't take up a ton of room, but it'll be there.



ETA



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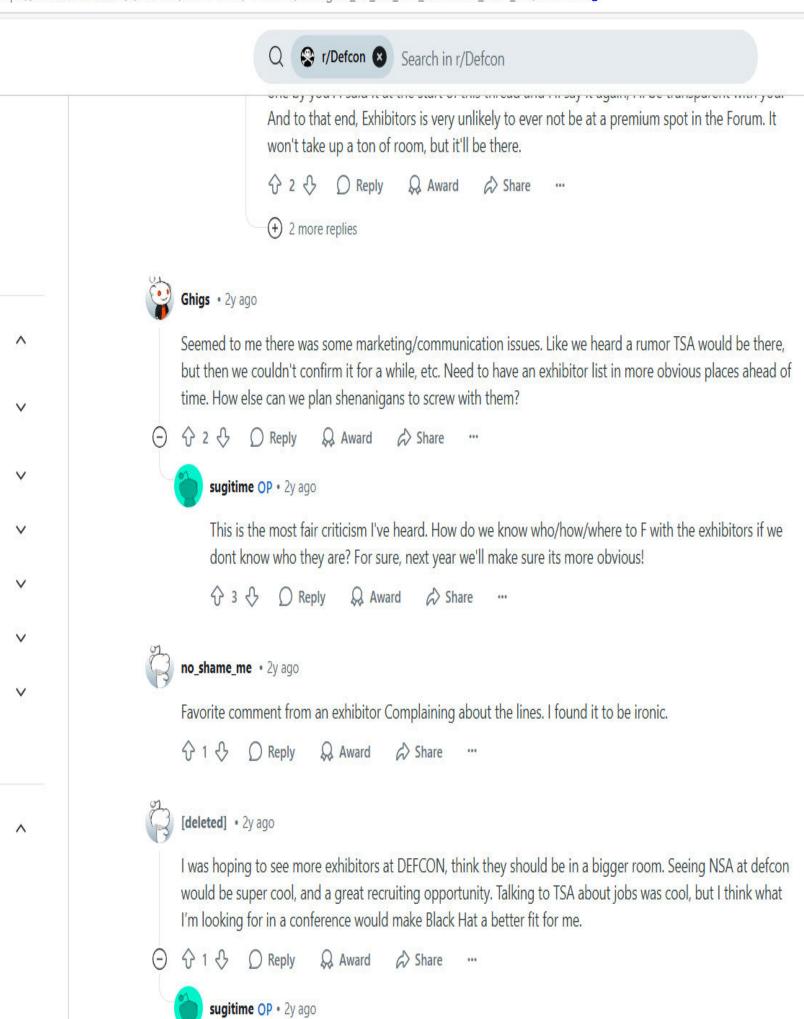
I think I'm good and I really appreciate you taking the time to address each of my points. It's okay that we disagree and I'm really grateful for you running this program.

I'm not going to pester you with more questions. Really well done this year.



No problem at all! If you're asking it, chances are you arent the only one thinking it, so more than happy to take the time to address it.







The space worked! Nice, glad to hear it. People who wanted to see it went, and people who did not want to go to that type of thing did not go.

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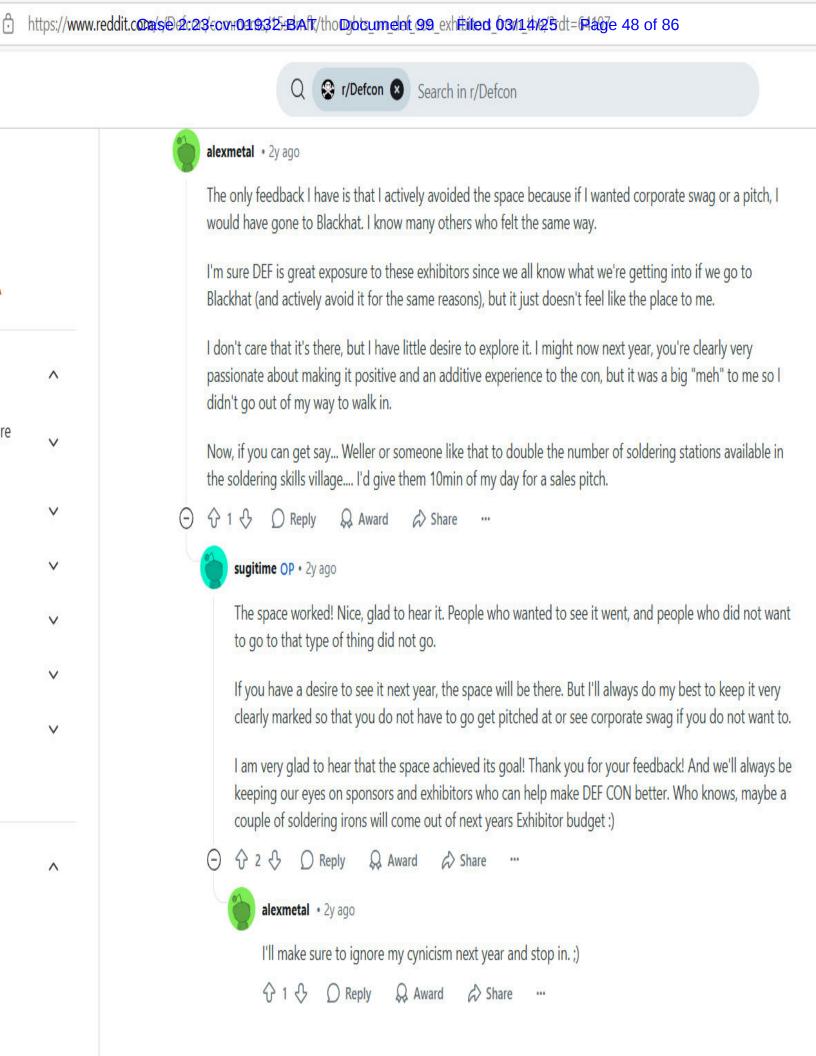


Exhibit 3

r/Defcon Search in r/Defcon

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More from the Hadnagy v Defcon / Moss lawsuit - Discovery Conference

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and Plaintiffs' alleged damages.

The really interesting part of this document though is the outline of what lead to the banning - According to Defcon / Moss in late 2021 a former employee of Hadnagy's approached a third party (not Defcon or Moss) and complained that Hadnagy had engaged in abusive, harassing and controlling behavior. This third party contacted Hadnagy who they claimed confirmed the behavior but offered some explanations they found unsatisfactory so the third party contacted Defcon.

(I believe this employee may be discussed in this article and I think Hadnagy has also discussed them in some talks https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/water-my-friend-christopher-hadnagy/)



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I'm sure all that will come out in discovery but damn it I am curious now.

One other thing, in this document the behavior certainly seems egregious enough for a lawsuit to have been filed against Hadnagy. Was one?

Anyway this is where we stand until October 11th.





DC is not a fucking court. It has no investigatory authority nor should it ever be expected to spend hundreds of hours and thousands of dollars to "prove beyond a shadow of a doubt" someone violated the COC. It can't and should not try to give alleged COC violators "due process." It is a false equivalency to think a COC is akin to some legal framework. DC is a private company and it can ban people for whatever legal reason it wants.

It has a community expectation to protect attendees from dangerous assholes and the bar for meeting that should not be so high that sexual predators etc. roam the halls of DC waiting the results of some goon tribunal.

IMO they made a good decision to ban a COC violator after a very reasonable effort to corroborate reports. I hope they continue to do just that and not let this lawsuit delay the good faith effort to eliminate creeps from hacker spaces.



Fair to some point, but I think its always fair to give people due process, of sorts. I know I wouldn't want to be banned on a whim. Due process is a protection against that.





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-_-__- • 2y ago

Wait, why is there a lawsuit? It's a private event you can ban whoever you want can't you? Or is it more of a slander case or something like that?



Reply



nvemb3r • 2y ago

It is suspected that Hadnagy is attempting to use the court system's discovery process to identify his accusers. Defcon has been keeping reports of sources anonymous, but a judge may force them to name names.

If Hadnagy get's his way, it will be difficult to maintain the anonymity of those that report misconduct.

https://twitter.com/AlyssaM_InfoSec/status/1567877229945700353?s=20&t=v1z5U4OavTVRn7ZSRs6I-w





dumpster-pirate • 2y ago

Hadnagy is such an influential figure in this industry. I don't know DT personally but I assume he is smart enough not to ban someone with such influence and respect unless the allegations against them are substantial and irrefutable.

I am curious how this turns out in the end but I don't see a future where Hadnagy is at DEF CON 31 or any other DEF CONs in the future, whether he is unbanned or not.









sugitime • 2y ago

Hagney is this industry's Weinstein, and it isn't a well kept secret amongst those in the industry. I personally know decision makers who have refused to do business with him for years because of his behavior.

Now he just takes his scum baggery to an all time low by using a lawsuit to pull out the names of people accused of harassing him. What a fucking sleezeball.

分 30 公





PNWCyberSecCurious OP • 2y ago

I don't know him (or DT), but I do know a couple people who do and they are not complimentary. As I said in my last thread though the actual banning isn't what I am concerned about. It's the way it was done and the foreseeable consequences. Anyone who didn't think a lawsuit would result over this was just deluding themselves. Maybe Hadnagy wins, maybe he doesn't but at the least I bet a due process clause ends up in a lot of CoCs.





sugitime • 2y ago



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Though not the exact situation, the principle applies. Relevant XKCD: https://xkcd.com/1357/

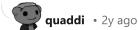
○ 分 13 殳 Reply



PNWCyberSecCurious OP • 2y ago

Due process can also refer to a defined process for the treatment of disciplinary actions in a private setting and that is the meaning I am using.

○ 分 -10 分 □ Reply



Process: 1) receive report of attendee misconduct 2) others confirm similar behavior 3) ban. Sounds like a reasonable process especially if the intent is to PROTECT ATTENDEES FROM **HARM**

☆ 18 **♣ □** Reply



sugitime • 2y ago

Yeah dude you sound like you're defending a serial sexual predator. It's a pretty bad look, just saying.

+ 7 more replies



That process was followed. Hadnagy sued because he was unhappy about it.

+ 4 more replies



[deleted] • 2y ago • Edited 2y ago



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with subjective matter like social engineering, the veracity of his brand is based on reputation.

The man makes a living teaching people how to exploit weaknesses in people counter to their own self interests in order to gain a tactical advantage.

Now, whatever came about as a result on one's own self-destructive stupidity is a matter of conjecture at this point, but it affects the brand and reputation.

There's been an arbitrary decision made by committee of a privately run entity, which holds influence in the community of practice that has made a public announcement that is detrimental.

In any other venue, CH would have the right to face both accusations and accuser in civil litigation. DC is opting to protect the rights of the accusing party, as well they should, to protect the integrity of their good faith reporting process, so no one should face reprisal.

All this said, however, DC does not have an unbiased path for arbitration and and right to refute unsubstantiated claims in a transparent manner that allows for the community writ large to form their own opinions.

I'm not for or against either party here. But I have seen where one person's moral interpretation of a story after the fact has been used in an attempt to derail someone's career in multiple instances.

People are flawed; and everyone fucks up somewhere along the line. If we don't create teachable moments and allow for people to grow past their mistakes, we're certainly not better for it.

prclayfish • 2y ago
AMEN
☆ 2
prclayfish • 2y ago
This is fascinating, thank you for sharing and great analysis.
I'm just really curious about the third party, I wonder who that would be?
① 3 more replies
sephstorm • 2y ago



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I mean you answered your own question there.

was Hadnagy given a chance to respond to those complaints?

He claims in the lawsuit he was never contacted about the accusations so no.

abusive, harassing and controlling behavior

That is what is interesting to me. Obviously it doesn't quite answer things but maybe opens the door a bit.

A number of people are taking the second item as proof that Hadnagy's only purpose in bringing this lawsuit is to discover the identity of the witnesses so they may be harassed.

Of course they are. They want to believe it so they will look for any evidence to support that theory. We'll have to wait and see if they are right.

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solution looks expensive and overly intensive, timele to begin

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sugitime • 2y ago

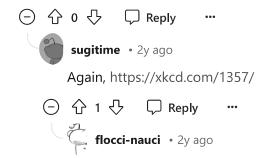
Yeah dude you sound like you're defending a serial sexual predator. It's a pretty bad look, just saying.



you're defending a serial sexual predator.

In the good old days, this sort of dispute would have been settled in a duel to the death at dawn. But unfortunately we won't get a Deathcon next summer, and have to allow Hagdny's dispute resolve in a court of law.

I defend a person's right to have their dispute heard and tried in a court of law, and so should you. Believing otherwise is a pretty bad look as some would say.





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in the lawsuit that DT's statements in the transparency report were defamatory and cast him in a false light.

You're so stupid that you don't even realize that your words are doing more to help Hadnagy's case than the person you criticized for defending him.

That said, criticizing someone for defending someone exercising their rights as a citizen makes you look like an asshole. And not a very bright one either.

Just, ya know, saying.



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flocci-nauci • 2y ago

I have no idea what you're trying to say here.

Referring to Hadnagy (assuming you don't mean DT) as a sexual predator only bolster's his claims in the lawsuit that DT's statements in the transparency report were defamatory and cast him in a false light.

You're so stupid that you don't even realize that your words are doing more to help Hadnagy's case than the person you criticized for defending him.

That said, criticizing someone for defending someone exercising their rights as a citizen makes you look like an asshole. And not a very bright one either.

Just, ya know, saying.



○ 分 1 ↔





sugitime • 2y ago

I have no idea what you're trying to say here.

Ya it shows.





flocci-nauci • 2y ago



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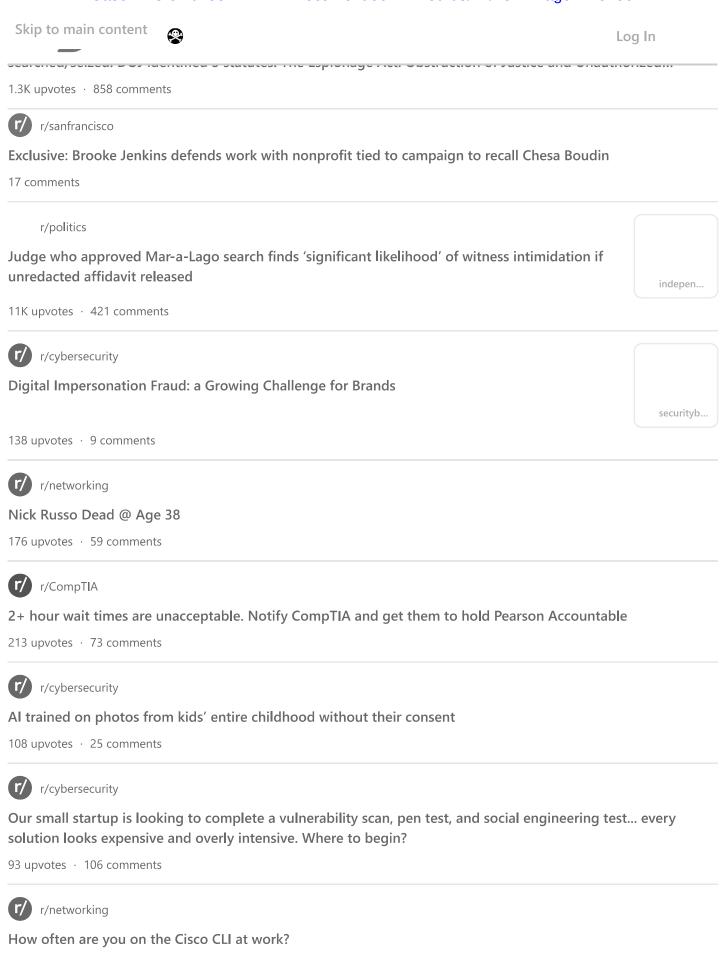
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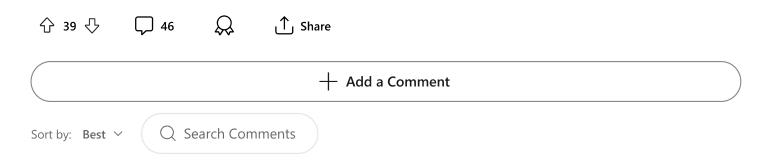
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DC is not a fucking court. It has no investigatory authority nor should it ever be expected to spend hundreds of hours and thousands of dollars to "prove beyond a shadow of a doubt" someone violated the COC. It can't and should not try to give alleged COC violators "due process." It is a false equivalency to think a COC is akin to some legal framework. DC is a private company and it can ban people for whatever legal reason it wants.

It has a community expectation to protect attendees from dangerous assholes and the bar for meeting that should not be so high that sexual predators etc. roam the halls of DC waiting the results of some goon tribunal.

IMO they made a good decision to ban a COC violator after a very reasonable effort to corroborate reports. I hope they continue to do just that and not let this lawsuit delay the good faith effort to eliminate creeps from hacker spaces.



Wait, why is there a lawsuit? It's a private event you can ban whoever you want can't you? Or is it more of a slander case or something like that?



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magnagy is such an influential figure in this industry. I don t know DI personally put I assume he is smart enough not to ban someone with such influence and respect unless the allegations against them are substantial and irrefutable.

I am curious how this turns out in the end but I don't see a future where Hadnagy is at DEF CON 31 or any other DEF CONs in the future, whether he is unbanned or not.





Disclaimers: Have met CH and DT before, but only professionally.

CH is not only a personality, but has build up a brand and business around that personality, and when dealing with subjective matter like social engineering, the veracity of his brand is based on reputation.

The man makes a living teaching people how to exploit weaknesses in people counter to their own self interests in order to gain a tactical advantage.

Now, whatever came about as a result on one's own self-destructive stupidity is a matter of conjecture at this point, but it affects the brand and reputation.

There's been an arbitrary decision made by committee of a privately run entity, which holds influence in the community of practice that has made a public announcement that is detrimental.

In any other venue, CH would have the right to face both accusations and accuser in civil litigation. DC is opting to protect the rights of the accusing party, as well they should, to protect the integrity of their good faith reporting process, so no one should face reprisal.

All this said, however, DC does not have an unbiased path for arbitration and and right to refute unsubstantiated claims in a transparent manner that allows for the community writ large to form their own opinions.

I'm not for or against either party here. But I have seen where one person's moral interpretation of a story after the fact has been used in an attempt to derail someone's career in multiple instances.

People are flawed; and everyone fucks up somewhere along the line. If we don't create teachable moments and allow for people to grow past their mistakes, we're certainly not better for it.







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PNWCyberSecCurious OP • 2y ago

thanks. there are rumors about who started the original complaintant was but i have no proof so not naming names. no idea who the third party is.

prclayfish • 2y ago

The only logical answer I can come up with is an attorney.

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same. but i guess we have to see how this plays out.



Did they do any investigating or just accept what they were told.

They reached out to at least 6 other people

I mean you answered your own question there.

was Hadnagy given a chance to respond to those complaints?

He claims in the lawsuit he was never contacted about the accusations so no.

abusive, harassing and controlling behavior

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sephstorm • 2y ago

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PNWCyberSecCurious OP • 2y ago

That's what the court is for.

and that is why he is suing.



DefconisCancelledBot • 1y ago

Hello! I am an automated bot with one purpose, and one purpose alone: To inform you that DEF CON is, in fact, cancelled this year. We know it sucks. We were looking forward to seeing you too :(

Maybe next year!

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prclayfish • 2y ago

AMEN

û 2 ♂ □ Reply □ Award 1 Share …

prclayfish • 2y ago

This is fascinating, thank you for sharing and great analysis.

I'm just really curious about the third party, I wonder who that would be...?

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([deleted] • 2y ago

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